from 10 to 60 mg of Diclofenac in acid and/or salt form together with an alkali metal bicarbonate selected from the group consisting of sodium bicarbonate, potassium bicarbonate and mixtures thereof and customary excipients and adjuvants, wherein said alkali metal bicarbonate is present in an amount of from 20 to 80 % by weight based on the weight of Diclofenac.

A1 concl'd

2 ~~14~~ (Amended). A method according to claim ~~13~~ 1 wherein said alkali metal bicarbonate is present in an amount of from 40 to 80 % by weight based on the weight of Diclofenac.

3 ~~16~~ (Amended). A method according to claim ~~14~~ 2 wherein said average C_{max} of Diclofenac is comprised between 1700 and 2300 ng/ml and said pharmaceutical formulation contains about 50 mg of Diclofenac in a form selected from the group consisting of its potassium salt form and its sodium salt form.

A2

4 ~~17~~ (Amended). A method according to claim ~~14~~ 2 wherein said average C_{max} of Diclofenac is comprised between 800 and 900 ng/ml and said pharmaceutical formulation contains about 25 mg of Diclofenac in a form selected from the group consisting of its potassium salt form and its sodium salt form.

5 ~~18~~ (Amended). A method according to claim ~~14~~ 2 wherein said average C_{max} of Diclofenac is comprised between 400 and 500 ng/ml and said pharmaceutical formulation contains about 12.5 mg of Diclofenac in a form selected from the group

consisting of its potassium salt form and its sodium salt form.

6 1
~~18~~ (Amended). A method according to claim ~~13~~ wherein said average C_{max} of Diclofenac is reached after 13÷27 minutes following administration.

7
~~20~~ (Amended). A method for obtaining an average T_{max} of Diclofenac after 5-30 minutes following administration in a human patient in need of such a treatment, which comprises

administering to said patient a pharmaceutical formulation containing Diclofenac in acid and/or salt form together with an alkali metal bicarbonate selected from the group consisting of sodium bicarbonate, potassium bicarbonate and mixtures thereof and customary excipients and adjuvants, wherein said alkali metal bicarbonate is present in an amount of from 20 to 80 % by weight based on the weight of Diclofenac.

8 7
~~21~~ (Amended). A method according to claim ~~20~~ wherein said T_{max} of Diclofenac is reached after 13-27 minutes since administration.

9 7
~~22~~ (Amended). A method according to claim ~~20~~ wherein said pharmaceutical formulation contains from 10 to 60 mg of Diclofenac in acid and/or salt form.

10 9
~~23~~ (Amended). A method according to claim ~~22~~ wherein said alkali metal bicarbonate is present in an amount of from 40 to 80 % by weight based on the weight of Diclofenac.

A2 concld

11 ~~25~~ (Amended). A method according to claim ~~20~~ 7 wherein said formulation is a pharmaceutical formulation for oral use comprising at least an immediate release layer and at least a delayed release layer, said immediate release layer containing Diclofenac in acid and/or salt form together with an alkali metal bicarbonate selected from the group consisting of sodium bicarbonate, potassium bicarbonate and mixtures thereof and customary excipients and adjuvants, wherein said alkali metal bicarbonate is present in an amount of from 20 to 80 % by weight based on the weight of Diclofenac.

A3

12 ~~26~~ (Amended). A method according to claim 11 ~~25~~ wherein said second delayed release layer also contains Diclofenac as the active principle.

13 ~~27~~ (Amended). A method according to claim 11 ~~25~~ wherein said alkali metal bicarbonate is present in an amount of from 40 to 80 % by weight based on the weight of Diclofenac.

14 ~~28~~ (Amended). A method according to claim 13 ~~27~~ wherein said Diclofenac is present in its potassium and/or sodium salt form